



Project | SEARCH

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ASD Career Links

- Funded through National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR)
- Research related to Vocational Rehabilitation Models for Individuals with ASD
- One of 4 research studies

ASD Career Links

- Purpose of the study:
 - Understand how 2 different types of job training programs work for young people with ASD
 - School Based
 - Community Based

ASD Career Links

- Works like any other Project SEARCH site – ie. Application, interview, etc.
- Big Differences:
 - Must have ASD to participate
 - Randomized clinical trial

What makes this project a success?

- The “Bon Secours Effect”
 - Is it the students?
 - Is it the partnerships?
 - Is it the business?
 - Is it the staff?

Partnerships

- Longstanding Relationships
 - Cincinnati Children's Hospital
 - Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services
 - VCU's internal Community Rehabilitation Program
- New Relationships
 - Bon Secours Richmond Health System
 - St. Mary's Hospital

Cincinnati Children's Hospital

- Worked with Erin and Susie since the late 90's
- Consult prior to applying for grant
- Provided Technical Assistance prior to securing business and after
 - Meetings with CEO, VP, Managers
 - Tour of Hospital
 - MULTIPLE phone calls and emails

Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services

- Collaborated with DRS prior to applying for grant
- SEARCH was in its infancy in Virginia
 - Second SEARCH site in state
 - 2 other sites came on the same year
 - Multiplied rapidly
- Funding
 - From none to Milestones
 - Increases in Milestone Payments
 - How do you do this?
- Counselors
 - From 3 to 1
- Positive Behavior Supports



Bon Secours Richmond Health System

- “Good Help to Those in Need”
- Values:
 - Respect
 - Quality
 - Justice
 - Compassion
 - Stewardship
 - Integrity
 - Growth
 - Innovation
- 4 Local Hospitals and 1 Heart Institute



Bon Secours Richmond Health System

- 400 bed facility with multiple medical office buildings on the campus
- Through Gallup poll achieved world-class patient and employee engagement scores
- Top 10% in Emergency Care (including pediatric ED)
- National Recognition
 - Stroke Treatment
 - Heart and Vascular Care
 - Surgical Weight Loss
 - Community Cancer Center



Business Liaison

- Bon Secours assigned the project a Business Liaison
 - Weston Thiss
 - 15 years with Bon Secours
 - Certified Six Sigma Green Belt
 - Most diverse department spanning 30 nationalities
- Toured with Erin
- Managers Forums

Bon Secours Richmond Health System

- Start at the top
 - Our VP of Marketing is our “champion”
 - With
- Keep the “top” involved
 - Recognition
 - Awards
 - Press
 - Periodic updates



Staff

- Instructor (Henrico County Public Schools)
 - Transition Specialist
 - Parent of a child with ASD
- Employment Specialists (VCU RRTC)
 - Masters degrees in Rehabilitation Counseling
 - Certified Rehabilitation Counselors
 - One has her PBSF
 - One is getting her BCBA
- Behavior Consultant (VCU RRTC)
 - More than 20 years of experience with individuals with ASD
- Project Director (VCU RRTC)
 - More than 15 years of experience with individuals with ASD and other disabilities
 - Former Employment Specialist



Students

- Meet the same eligibility requirements as other SEARCH sites
- Must have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Do not find students ineligible based on behavior issues
 - Find ways to better support those students
- Parents
 - Communication
 - Involvement

Challenges

- “Runners”
- High Anxiety
- Structure, routine, some more structure and a little more routine
- Delayed expression of emotion

Additional Supports

- Behavioral Consultation with Behavior Analyst
- Consistent Structure to Seemingly Unstructured Internships
- Behaviorally Defining Idioms, Social Skills, and Work Expectations
- Visual Supports to Increase Implementation of Strategies
- Self Monitoring Checklists and Reinforcement Programs
- Role-Playing and Practice for Required Social Skills
- Ongoing Intensive Instruction and Monitoring of Student Success



Press

- Pros
 - Publicity for the Project and the Business
 - Education for community
 - Recruitment tool
- Cons
 - No control over what is printed
 - Misinformation regarding project
 - Partners left out = hurt feelings

Sandbox Etiquette

- NO throwing sand
- NO flicking sand
- NO kicking sand
- Communicate, communicate, communicate
- Monthly meetings
- Honesty
- Keep your eye on the Prize – the interns!!!

Preliminary Results

- After 3 complete years:
 - Employed
 - Community Group (SEARCH)
 - 100% at 9 months post graduation
 - 93 % at 18 months post graduation
 - School Group
 - 0% at 9 months and 18 months post graduation
 - Average Hours Worked
 - 20 per week
 - Average Earnings
 - \$9.14 per hour

Sample Employment Outcomes

- **Departments:**

- Nutrition Services
- Infection Control
- Family Center
- Intensive Care Unit
- Environmental Services
- Central Sterile Services
- Employee Wellness
- Diabetes Treatment Center
- Mother and Infant Unit
- Durable Medical Equipment
- Surgical Care
- Print Shop
- Pharmacy
- Environmental Services
- Linen Distribution
- Laboratory Services
- Associated Internists



Questions???

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